

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for processing a fluid sample comprising:
 - (i) a platform comprising:
 - (a) a first chamber suitable for receiving a sample;
 - (b) a second chamber into which an analyte extracted from the sample or a reagent may be delivered; and
 - (c) a first functional component which is releasably held in place on the platform and wherein the first functional component is able to act as a collector for moving the sample, analyte or reagent from one chamber on the platform to another chamber on the platform; and
 - (ii) an arm capable of being raised and lowered and removeably attached to the first functional component such that the first functional component may be raised and lowered with the arm, wherein the platform is movable such that any chamber or functional component may be aligned with respect to the arm.
2. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the platform is circular.
3. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the arm mechanically removeably attaches to the first functional component.
4. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the arm can be raised and lowered in a substantially vertical direction.

5. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the first functional component is used to remove an analyte from the sample.
6. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 5 wherein the second chamber of the apparatus comprises a solid phase binding material capable of forming a complex with the analyte.
7. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein the solid phase binding material is silica.
8. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein the apparatus further comprises an attracting material for attracting the complex.
9. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 8 wherein the attracting material is a magnet.
10. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 8 wherein the first functional component is a sheath which provides an interface between the attracting material and the complex.
11. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the apparatus further comprises a physical processor.
12. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the physical processor is capable of heating the contents of a chamber of the apparatus.
13. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the physical processor is capable of sonicating the contents of a chamber of the apparatus.

14. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein a chamber of the apparatus is coated at least in part with an electrically conducting polymer.

15. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein a chamber of the apparatus comprises pre-dispensed reagents.

16. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 15 wherein the pre-dispensed reagents are bound to a solid phase binding material.

17. (Previously presented) A method of using the apparatus of Claim 1 for the processing of a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction.

18. (Withdrawn) A method of processing a fluid sample wherein the method comprises:

- (i) placing a sample comprising an analyte into a first chamber located on a platform of an apparatus;
- (ii) binding the analyte to a binding material to form an analyte-binding material complex;
- (iii) lowering a means for reversibly attracting said complex into said first chamber and allowing the complex to be attracted to said means;
- (iv) raising said means from the first chamber;
- (v) moving said platform such that a second chamber is now aligned with the means for reversibly attracting said complex; and
- (vi) lowering said means for reversibly attracting said complex into the second chamber and allowing the complex to detract from said means;

wherein the analyte is subjected to a physical processing step either in the first chamber or in the second chamber.

19. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 17 wherein the physical processing step is a sonication step.

20. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 17 wherein the physical processing step is a heating step.
21. (Withdrawn) A method according to Claim 17 wherein the sample is also subjected to a chemical processing step.
22. (Withdrawn) Use of a method according to Claim 17 for the processing of a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction.
23. (Withdrawn) Use of a binding material in a method according to Claim 17 for the processing of a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction.
24. (Withdrawn) A lid, suitable for closure of a vessel, said lid comprising a membrane wherein said membrane is recessed within the lid.
25. (Currently amended) An apparatus for processing a fluid sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction, comprising:
- (i) a platform;
 - (ii) a chamber suitable for receiving a sample, wherein the chamber is integrated into the platform or removable from it;
 - (iii) a functional component capable of moving an analyte or reagent or piercing seals of chambers that may reversibly attach to an arm of the apparatus and that may be held on the platform such that it can be removed from and replaced onto the platform;
 - (iv) a sealed chamber comprising a predispensed reagent for use in processing a fluid sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction arranged on the platform; and

- (v) an arm capable of being raised and lowered that is removeably attached to the functional component such that the component may be raised and lowered with the arm;

wherein the platform is moveable such that a chamber or functional component may be aligned with respect to the arm.

26. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 25 wherein the platform is circular.

27. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 25 further comprising an exchangeable chamber containing a predisposed reagent.

28. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 27 wherein the exchangeable chamber is color coded or marked with a bar code.

29. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 27 wherein the exchangeable chamber is marked with a bar code and the apparatus further comprises a bar code reader.

30. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 25 wherein the arm is mechanically removeably attached to the functional component.

31. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 25 wherein the functional component is capable of moving the analyte or reagent.

32. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 25 wherein the apparatus further comprises a physical processor.

33. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 32 wherein the physical processor is capable of heating the contents of a chamber of the apparatus.

34. (Previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 32 wherein the physical processor is capable of sonicating the contents of a chamber of the apparatus.

35. (Previously presented) A method of processing a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification comprising introducing the sample to the apparatus of Claim 25.

36. (Currently amended) A platform for processing a sample prior to a nucleic acid amplification reaction, the platform comprising

- (i) a chamber for receiving a sample;
- (ii) one or more further chambers containing predisposed reagents for use in the processing, the one or more further chambers being sealed; and
- (iii) a hole for engagement with a feature of ~~accommodating~~ a functional component to thereby support the functional component.

37. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 36 wherein the platform is circular.

38. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 36 wherein the platform is able to receive an exchangeable chamber containing a further predisposed reagent for use in the processing.

39. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 38 wherein the chamber is color coded or marked with a bar code.

40. (Currently amended) A disposable platform for carrying out a processing operation on a fluid sample, the platform comprising

- (a) a chamber suitable for receiving a sample;
- (b) one or more further chambers containing predisposed reagents required for the processing operation; and

(c) a first functional component which is releasably held in place on the platform such that it can be removed from and replaced onto the platform and wherein the first functional component is configured to act as a collector for moving the sample, an analyte contained therein or the reagent from one chamber to another.

41. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 40 wherein the platform is adapted to carry out a processing operation on a single fluid sample.

42. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 40 wherein the further chambers containing predispensed reagents are sealed.

43. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 42 wherein the further chambers are sealed by a metal seal or membrane.

44. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 42 further comprising a second functional component capable of interacting with the chambers.

45. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 44 wherein the second functional component comprises a cutter.

46. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 40 where the first functional component comprises a separating material for separating a solid phase material from the sample, and further comprises a sheath which provides an interface between the separating material and the solid phase material.

47. (Previously presented) The platform of Claim 40 wherein the predispensed reagents comprise a processing reagent bound to a solid phase binding material.